



Cascade County & Lewis & Clark County Joint Commission Meeting
June 22, 2017 – 11:00 a.m.
Dearborn Fire Station
56 Dearborn River Road, Cascade Montana

Cascade County Commissioners

Jim Larson
Jane Weber
Joe Briggs

Lewis & Clark County Commissioners

Susan Good Geise
Andy Hunthausen
Jim McCormick

Call to Order:

James L. Larson, Cascade County Commission Chair

Pledge of Allegiance

1. Welcome, Introductions
2. Public Hearing

Cascade County and Lewis and Clark County Commissioners will conduct a hearing to consider a request from the Dearborn Fire Service Area for a fee assessment to increase from \$75.00 to \$200.00 per habitable structure. Said increase is proposed for the purpose of supporting fire protection in the Dearborn Fire Service Area.

Motion to Approve or Disapprove:

Cascade County Resolution 17-63/Lewis & Clark County Resolution 2017-59

A joint resolution to increase the fire service area fee within the Dearborn Volunteer Fire Service Area.

Option #1: Flat Fee

Option #2: Fee w/Tier Structure

3. Public comment on any public matter that is not on the meeting agenda and this is within Commissioners' jurisdiction. (MCA 2-3-103).
4. Motion for Adjournment.

BEFORE THE BOARDS OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR
CASCADE COUNTY AND LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY

Option #1
(Flat Fee Increase)

IN RE: RESOLUTION TO INCREASE
FIRE SERVICE AREA FEE WITHIN THE
DEARBORN VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE AREA

CASCADE COUNTY RESOLUTION 17-63
LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY RESOLUTION 2017-59

BE IT RESOLVED by the Boards of County Commissioners for Cascade County and Lewis and Clark County, (the Counties), as follows:

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2401, the Counties previously and formally established the Dearborn Fire Service Area; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2404(3), the Counties shall collect the funds necessary to operate a fire service area by imposing a special assessment on the owners of structures in the fire service area and shall collect the assessments with the general taxes of the county, such assessment being a lien on the property; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2404(1) and (2), the special assessments of the owners of structures within the above referenced fee service areas were established pursuant to Resolution 06-038 by the Counties at the annual rate of \$75 for each habitable structure to be charged to owners of structures within the respective Fee Service Area that are benefitted by the services offered by the Fire Service Area; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2404(1) the Counties shall, as necessary after the creation of a fire service area establish a schedule of rates to be charged the owners of habitable structures in the respective Fire Service Area; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees for the Dearborn Fire Service Area voted to request the Counties to approve a fee increase in the amount of \$200 on all habitable structures in the respective Fire Service Area; and

WHEREAS, in support of the requested fee increase, the Counties have received an information packet documenting the basis for the fee increase; and

WHEREAS, based upon MCA § 7-33-2404(1), the Counties have scheduled a Public Hearing (Hearing) for June 22, 2017, at 11:00 a.m. to examine the merit of increasing the rate charged to owners of habitable structures benefitted by the above referenced Fire Service Area from the existing \$75 to \$200 per habitable structure; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2401(3), the Counties have authorized, directed and caused to be published, in both Cascade County and Lewis and Clark County on June 11, 2017, and June 18, 2017, in accord with MCA § 7-1-2121, a Notice of Public Hearing (Notice); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2401(3) the Counties, at the Public Hearing have received budgetary justification from the trustees of the Dearborn Fire Service Area for a fee modification and increase, and (i) accepted written protests from property owners within the above referenced Fire Service Area of the proposed increase; and (ii) received general protests and comments relating to the proposed fee increase; and

CASCADE COUNTY RESOLUTION 17-63
LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY RESOLUTION 2017-59

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2401(3), the Counties, in their discretion and based upon testimony received at the public hearing, may establish a different fee schedule than proposed.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Boards of County Commissioners for Cascade County and Lewis and Clark County hereby pass this Resolution to Increase Fire Service Area Fees for the Dearborn Fire Service Area from \$75 per habitable structure to \$_____.

Passed and adopted this 22nd day of June, 2017

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CASCADE COUNTY, MONTANA

James L. Larson, Chairman

Jane Weber, Commissioner

Joe Briggs, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Rina Fontana Moore, Clerk and Recorder

Passed and adopted this 22nd day of June, 2017

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY, MONTANA

Susan Good Geise, Chairman

Andy Hunthausen, Commissioner

Jim McCormick, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Paulette DeHart, Clerk & Recorder/Treasurer

BEFORE THE BOARDS OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR
CASCADE COUNTY AND LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY

Option #2
Fee w/Tier Structure

IN RE: RESOLUTION TO INCREASE
FIRE SERVICE AREA FEE WITHIN THE
DEARBORN VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE AREA

CASCADE COUNTY RESOLUTION 17-63
LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY RESOLUTION 2017-59

BE IT RESOLVED by the Boards of County Commissioners for Cascade County and Lewis and Clark County, (the Counties), as follows:

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2401, the Counties previously and formally established the Dearborn Fire Service Area; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2404(3), the Counties shall collect the funds necessary to operate a fire service area by imposing a special assessment on the owners of structures in the fire service area and shall collect the assessments with the general taxes of the county, such assessment being a lien on the property; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2404(1) and (2), the special assessments of the owners of structures within the above referenced fee service areas were established pursuant to Resolution 06-038 by the Counties at the annual rate of \$75 for each habitable structure to be charged to owners of structures within the respective Fee Service Area that are benefitted by the services offered by the Fire Service Area; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2404(1) the Counties shall, as necessary after the creation of a fire service area establish a schedule of rates to be charged the owners of habitable structures in the respective Fire Service Area; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees for the Dearborn Fire Service Area voted to request the Counties to approve a fee increase in the amount of \$200 on all habitable structures in the respective Fire Service Area; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees for the Dearborn Fire Service Area has also proposed an alternative tiered fee structure for all habitable structures in the respective Fire Service Area; and

WHEREAS, in support of the requested fee increase, the Counties have received an information packet documenting the basis for the fee increase; and

WHEREAS, based upon MCA § 7-33-2404(1), the Counties have scheduled a Public Hearing (Hearing) for June 22, 2017, at 11:00 a.m. to examine the merit of increasing the rate charged to owners of habitable structures benefitted by the above referenced Fire Service Area from the existing \$75 to \$200 per habitable structure; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2401(3), the Counties have authorized, directed and caused to be published, in both Cascade County and Lewis and Clark County on June 11, 2017, and June 18, 2017, in accord with MCA § 7-1-2121, a Notice of Public Hearing (Notice); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2401(3) the Counties, at the Public Hearing have received budgetary justification from the trustees of the Dearborn Fire Service Area for a fee modification and increase, and (i) accepted written protests from property owners within the above referenced Fire Service Area of the proposed increase; and (ii) received general protests and comments relating to the proposed fee increase; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to MCA § 7-33-2401(3), the Counties, in their discretion and based upon testimony received at the public hearing, may establish a different fee schedule than proposed.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Boards of County Commissioners for Cascade County and Lewis and Clark County hereby pass this Resolution to Increase Fire Service Area Fees for the Dearborn Fire Service Area as set forth in the attached Exhibit A.

Passed and adopted this 22nd day of June, 2017

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CASCADE COUNTY, MONTANA

James L. Larson, Chairman

Jane Weber, Commissioner

Joe Briggs, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Rina Fontana Moore, Clerk and Recorder

Passed and adopted this 22nd day of June, 2017

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY, MONTANA

Susan Good Geise, Chairman

Andy Hunthausen, Commissioner

Jim McCormick, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Paulette DeHart, Clerk & Recorder/Treasurer

Exhibit A

	Taxable value range	Fire Fee	Total revenue by quadrant
Tier 1	\$0-\$675	\$90	\$15,120
Tier 2	\$676- \$1,600	\$190	\$32,110
Tier 3	\$1,601- \$3,000	\$240	\$44,400
Tier 4	\$3,001 & Up	\$340	\$51,000

Exhibit A

	Taxable value range	Fire Fee	Total revenue by quadrant
Tier 1	\$0-\$675	\$	\$
Tier 2	\$676- \$1,600	\$	\$
Tier 3	\$1,601- \$3,000	\$	\$
Tier 4	\$3,001 & Up	\$	\$

CASCADE COUNTY, MONTANA
COMMISSIONERS' JOURNAL #46

PUBLIC HEARING
PROPOSED FEE INCREASE FOR DEARBORN VOLUNTEER FIRE AREA
MONDAY JUNE 5, 2006
6:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Cascade County Madam Chairman Peggy Beltrone, Cascade Commissioners Lance Olson and Joe Briggs, Lewis and Clark Madam Chairman Anita Varons and Commissioner Ed Tinsley. Mary Flora, Bryant Owen, Karmen Moore, Karen K Stock, Charles M Black, Linda L Black, Robert W Schaack, Jess & Emma Canada, Howard and Louis Watson, Tom Bernasek, Cindy Martin, Stephen Martin, Lu Marie Strickland, Joe Slocum, Robert S Johnson, Bud Martinich, Patricia Jack, Gene Jack, Charlene Reeves, James Beck, Daniel J Ryan, Roy Stock, Greg Moore, Paul Brady, David Watts, Greg Gordon, Frank V Stimac, Leon Rubin, Ed and Rose Martin, Pat Rambo, Ken Miller, Valerie Colosimo, Daniel G Lemons, Mike Strickland and Debbie Beyer. Excused Lewis and Clark Commissioner Mike Murray

CALL TO ORDER

Madam Chairman Peggy Beltrone called the Hearing to Order

READING OF PUBLIC NOTICE

Madam Chairman Peggy Beltrone read the opening explanation.

The Board of County Commissioners is in receipt of a request from the Dearborn Fire service Area Board of Trustees for a fee increase for the Dearborn Fire Service Area which encompasses an area in both Lewis and Clark and Cascade Counties. Currently, benefited property owners pay \$45.00 annually for fire protection and emergency services. The proposed \$30.00 increase would raise the annual assessment to \$75.00. The proposed fee increase is the first request since 1992 and it appears to be based upon a variety of factors including but not limited to inflation and increased fuel cost.

PRESENTATION /OVERVIEW

Paul Brady of the Dearborn Volunteer Fire Department gave a presentation on the costs of equipping a volunteer fire fighter and the fact that the assessments have not increased in 13 years. With inflation that increased 67% since 1991 this request is for an increase of 66%. Paul Brady also listed the cost of radios that are required, training, new fire fighting equipment and the grants they have received to buy some of this equipment.

Madam Chairman Peggy Beltrone stated that Cascade County Commissioners will approve or disapprove the proposed increase at the next Commission meeting on June 13, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. and that the Commissioners had the Trustees submit written detailed financial and budget outlining revenues and expenditures of the Fire Service Area.

Madam Chairman Anita Varons announced Lewis and Clark would meet on June 15, 2006

PUBLIC COMMENT-PROPONENTS

Mary Flora stated \$45.00 is a minimum increase in fees.

Charles Black stated they should have doubled the increase. They need new equipment.

Dave Watts commented that if \$45.00 does not cut it, the fire department may close and they will have to rely on Wolf Creek. They should be paying \$150.00 per year to fund the department and they would have better insurance rates.

Cindy Martin was grateful for the fire department as she was involved in a horse accident and fire department was quick to respond and totally in favor of the increase.

Charlene Reeves was also in favor of the increase because if the fire department was not out here it would not be a good place. The fire department is all volunteers and the people work very hard.

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Cascade County, Rina Ft Moore - Clerk & Recorder

CASCADE COUNTY, MONTANA
COMMISSIONERS' JOURNAL #46

Tom Bernasek stated he volunteered to be on the fire board and worries about tax increases but was very impressed in overseeing the board's activities and the way they deal with their money and grants and the way they spend their money.

PUBLIC COMMENT-OPPONENTS

Bud Martinich only uses his cabin six times a year and pays for fire protection in Missoula on his main home and doesn't think it is fair that he has to pay a full rate for a summer cabin. He and his sister were handed down this cabin. He would be glad to pay double if he was a resident.

Ed Martin was against a 62% increase and they should work harder on grants and have pancake breakfasts. They need to get used equipment and they need to raise the money.

Daniel Lemons is life long resident and asked about a gate from the Dearborn fire department to get to his property.

Pat Rambo stated a friend had donated the land for this fire department and that was a mistake. He also commented that the big truck would not get past the swimming hole and doesn't think the people in the backcountry should have to pay the whole fee. He knows if he calls in and lives 1 ½ miles in and it would take the fire truck an hour and half to get to his place. He was also against the girls on the fire department as they are over 50 years old and they need new young men on the fire department. He thinks they need better roads not a fire department.

Rose Riley-Martin believes they need some increase but not 62% and questioned the expenses on the report sheets and more people are moving into the area.

Mike Stickland has lived there for 30 years and no fire truck has ever been on the road. He also questioned the debt on the fire truck and how much is still owed.

Paul Brady replied they have an \$11,000 payment per year for three more years on the truck and everything else is paid for and have used grants to buy other equipment..

Mike Stickland also commented the fire department has stopped at his place to ask where the fire is and the real money is going to the wrong place.

Greg Gordon who at one time was on the fire department asked about the response time between highway calls and fire calls and if all the money was going to the highway calls. He also wanted to know what the money was going for in the increase. He felt the response time was too long to the backcountry. He also asked if they don't have the increase will there still be a fire department.

Paul Brady replied that they bill insurance companies when they respond to rollovers on the Interstate and without this increase in fees it will be hard to pay the bills because of fuel cost. They are just trying to get enough money to operate on.

Greg Gordon stated he felt the fees should be assessed on value to make fairer and people with just land should also have to pay and people farther back should not have to pay the full fee. The Commissioners will check into this.

Madam Chairman Anita Varons explained all the cost to fight a structure fire is the same and the value of the structure does not matter. If a structure is \$50,000 or \$500,000 the cost to fight a fire is the same.

Pat Rambo questioned Indian fire crews and backcountry fires. Money should go to roads. The fire department is all old people.

Mike Strickland also questioned the assessment method and if their effort was worth anything.

Madam Chairman Beltrone and Varons stated the legislature set it up this way, but will check into this and they have not made up their minds at this time.

Joe Slouem asked about assessing people with just land and why just homeowners.

Dan Ryan asked for the breakdown of grassland fires to structure and medical emergencies and it was not fair to have the homeowners pay for all of the costs..

Paul Brady replied that 65% are grassland fires and forest fires and they do receive help from the DNRC.

Greg Gordon is paying the \$45.00 and the truck out here is not use for grassland fires.

CASCADE COUNTY, MONTANA
COMMISSIONERS' JOURNAL #46

Madam Chairman Peggy Beltrone closed the Public Hearing and announced that this resolution will be heard at the regular June 13th meeting.

Lewis and Clark Madam Chairman Anita Varons asked for the **MOTION** to pass this Resolution for Lewis and Clark County.

Commissioner Ed Tinsley moved to consider this resolution to increase the fee amount to \$75.00 in the Lewis and Clark area recommended by staff at the Thursday June 15th regular meeting. **MOTION was seconded.**

Commissioner Ed Tinsley commented that the 3rd Commissioner Mike Murray will review comments made at this meeting before the June 15th meeting.

Madam Chairman Anita Varons thanked everyone for attending and explained the Wolf Creek Fire Department.

Commissioner Ed Tinsley commented that people need to step up to help and fund raising is great but not the way to fund services. **MOTION carries 2-0.**

Paul Brady commented that the large truck has been up Sawmill Road and they do not have a place to hold fund raising events.

Commissioner Joe Briggs asked about the ISO rating. Paul Brady replied it is a 9 which helps with insurance costs.

Madam Chairman Peggy Beltrone answered the question that there are 370 structures paying the fire service fee in Cascade County.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.